

The Grand Promoter And the Cobbler

Major Crofoot Organizes the U. G. R. C. For His "Old Friend" Wasserman.

Major Crofoot, grand promoter and general organizer and debt shirker, was a little late in reaching the office. He had mounted the stairs in his usual cautious way and decided that the coast was clear when he got a surprise. The cobbler to whom he had been owing \$2 for two or three years was not only waiting at the door, but his state of mind was such that he saluted the major with: "By golly, but I believe you vhas run avhay und don't neffer come back no moore. I come by dis office moore ash feefy times, but I don't find you. I hak aboutt you, und eafrybody says you vhas a rascal und don't pay your debts. I don't know how she vhas dot I find you dis time."

"Can this be my dear old friend Wasserman?" exclaimed the major in reply



"BUT YOU PAY ME OR I MAKE A ROW," SAID THE COBBLER

as he extended his hand. "Good lands, but where have you been for the last year?" "I haf been hunting for you," was the brief reply. "You owe me \$2, and I haf run my legs almost off to get dot money. If you vhas in your office when I knock on der door you don't open him. If you see me on der street, you run avhay. I wait for you here dis morning, und ve shall settle up or haf some fights."

"Fights? Fights? My dear Mr. Wasserman, don't get excited. Come right into my office and we'll talk it over. I've had a check lying in my desk for the last six months for you. I'm sorry it isn't \$200 instead of \$2, as you are one of my old friends."

"I don't want some talk mit you," said the cobbler as he refused a chair. "I'll take my \$2 and go right avhay. When I find a man who vhas some deadbeats I don't do some more bizzness mit him."

"Don't you call me that, my friend. It pains me to hear such expressions from you."

"But you pay me or I make a row." "I hope and trust you won't," gently replied the promoter as he backed up to the rusty coal stove to get cold. "In the old days when I was hard up and had few friends you did some work for me and did not demand the ready cash. In fact, you trusted in my honor, reposed confidence in my financial integrity. It is one of the things I love to remember."

"You said you would pay me in two days," persisted the cobbler as his bristles continued to stand up. "If I did the fact has slipped my mind. It is only a trifling detail, however. Mr. Wasserman, I suppose you have heard of the great changes in my financial condition? You have not congratulated me, but you will as soon as your excitement is past."

"I told you I don't want some talk," replied the cobbler as he began to doubt himself. "If you vhas a rich man now you can pay your old debts."

"This true, my old friend; 'tis true. I can pay a thousand dollars for every cent I owe, and the feeling is a placid one. You come up here to collect the old account of \$2?"

"Und I vhan him right avhay, queek! If you don't pay me, look out! I vhas a bad man if I vhas cheated. One time a feller beat me out of 10 cents, und I almost kill him."

"To collect an old account of \$2," mused the major, "and you had no suspicion of the good luck awaiting you. My old friend, don't have a fit or faint when I inform you of the fact that you have been appointed treasurer of the Universal Goat Raising company, which has just been incorporated, with a capital of \$5,000,000. The appointment was made last evening, and I was delegated to inform you that your salary would be \$20,000 per year. Let us congratulate each other, Mr. Wasserman. I am the president of the corporation, of course, and, you being the treasurer, we will run things to suit ourselves. You can take off your hat and apron and go to work at once, or I can give you two or three days in which to dispose of your business and get a swallowtail coat."

"I want no talk; I want no goats," exclaimed the cobbler as he pranced around the room. "If you don't pay me dot \$2 we shall have some rows!" "Gently, Mr. Wasserman. It acts this way sometimes, but the excitement will

pass off. Yes, you are treasurer of the U. G. R. C., and I will explain to you that the idea is to buy 3,000,000 goats at a dollar apiece, ship them to the great prairies of the west, and in a year or two they will sell again at 100 per cent profit. We don't want to sell, however. We propose to supply the world with goats' milk. It has been discovered that a pint of goat's milk per day contains more nourishment than five pounds of meat, four pounds of flour or half a bushel of potatoes. The average man can do a full day's work on a pint. Give him a quart, and he'll work all night as well. It further has been discovered that goat's milk is an almost certain cure for consumption, asthma, liver complaint."

"Vill you pay me dot \$2?" interrupted the cobbler as he reached out for the major's coat collar. "Gently, my old friend," was the reply in a soothing voice. "I owe you \$2. It should have been paid long ago. It will be paid in about two minutes. As you are to become treasurer of the U. G. R. C., I feel it my duty to post you as to the aims and ambitions. The milk will be put up in fancy bottles, sterilized to preserve it indefinitely. Our first testimonial is from a leading actress and will astonish all consumptives. She says—

"I don't care what she says. For der last time, I ask you if you vill pay?" "I will," suavely replied the major. "There is \$2 coming to you for repairing my shoes. As treasurer of the U. G. R. C., you should file a bond of at least \$50,000. It might give you some trouble to do so, and as you are an old friend of mine I propose to extend the glad hand. In other words, I will reduce the bond to the trifling sum of \$2, and that squares the debt. Do you think you'll have time to hunt up a suit of office rooms this afternoon? You had better come in and let me go over to the bank with you, anyhow. Hereafter you will pay by check, you know. It will also be well for you to get some new clothes as soon as you can. I think this is about all—I think so."

"Und where vhas my \$2?" demanded the cobbler as a lump gathered in his throat. "You say you pay me my money, but where vhas she? You talk und talk, but you don't pay."

"Mr. Wasserman, you are a hard man to deal with. I have told you that we shall raise goats."

"But I don't care about goats." "Goats of both sexes." "But I vhan money." "Goats of all colors." "Dunder and blitzen!"

"You have no antipathy against goats of old gold color, have you? We must not start out prejudiced as to color, you know."

"By golly, but what a man—that a dodger! I don't believe he gives me any money!"

"And if you think of it," continued the major as he stepped on the cobbler's toes and began to crowd him out of the room, "you might inquire around and see if you can ascertain if there are any long tailed goats to be had in Wales. What, going? Well, goodbye until tomorrow, and try to get in early, and—"

The cobbler was out and the door locked against him. After gasping away for two or three minutes he said to himself:

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